

The Southeast News

VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 12

OCTOBER 1965



Rev. J. H. Lightbourne, Jr. Called To New Position

The Reverend James H. Lightbourne, Jr., superintendent of the Southeast Convention since 1957, submitted his resignation to the Board of Directors at its meeting on October 5.

Dr. Lightbourne has been called to be Conference Minister of the new Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ in North Carolina and Virginia. He will begin his new work on January 1, 1966.

The Southern Conference is made up of more than 68,000 members of more than 400 churches in North Carolina and Southern Virginia. It was formed through the consolidation of the Southern Synod of Evangelical and Reformed Churches, the Convention of the South of Congregational Christian Churches (Negro), and the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches (White).

The new conference legally came into being at a meeting held on September 30 at Elon College, North Carolina. Headquarters for the conference will be at Burlington, N. C. The Lightbournes will move the end of December.

Rev. Dr. Darley Downs Fall Meetings Speaker

The Rev. Dr. Darley Downs, a United Church of Christ missionary who has been prominently identified with the Christian movement in Japan for more than 40 years, was the featured speaker at the annual fall meetings of the associations and conferences of the Southeast Convention.

Dr. Downs has been active in the Interboard Committee for Christian Work in Japan since its organization in 1948. He has served as English secretary of the Council of Cooperation, which acts as a bridge between the United Church of Christ in Japan and the eight North American mission boards of the Interboard Committee. He was secretary of the Interboard Missionary Field Committee from 1948 to 1961.

Dr. Downs began his missionary service in 1919 under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, overseas agency of the Congregational Christian Churches, now a part of the United Church Board for World Ministries. In 1922 Mrs. Downs, the former Lucille Jarrard of Pontiac, Michigan, went to Tokyo to work in the Methodist Publishing House there. They were married the following year.

In the years that followed Dr. Downs taught at Doshisha University, Kyoto, and at Kobe College, Nishinomiya. He also served as mission secretary and director of the Language School in Tokyo.

While on temporary assignment in the Philippines in 1941, he was interned by the Japanese for four years. During this period he served as interpreter and liaison officer between his fellow American prisoners and Japanese officers. Mrs. Downs returned to America with their three children early in the war. The Downs returned to Japan in 1947.

Mr. Downs is a native of Manitou, Colorado. In 1917 he received a B. A. degree from Denver University and a Bachelor of Divinity degree from the



Cliff School of Theology (Denver University.) He received a Master of Sacred Theology degree from Union Theological Seminary in 1946 and also studied at Chicago Theological Seminary. He has received two Honorary Doctor of Divinity degrees: from Olivet College, Olivet, Michigan, in 1952; and from Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan, in 1963.

During his time in the Southeast Convention Dr. Downs spoke to the South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association at First Church, Andalusia, Alabama, October 9; the Central Alabama Association, Union Church, Mt. Creek, Alabama, October 10; the East Alabama Association, Russell Woods Church, Phenix City, Alabama, October 13, and the Bethel Church, West Point, Ga., October 14; the Georgia-South Carolina Conference, Oak Grove Church, Pine Mountain, Georgia, October 15; and the joint meeting of the Kentucky-Tennessee Conferences, Crossville, Tennessee, October 17.

Dr. Downs interpreted the work of our mission boards to the associations and conferences and stressed the importance of the local churches giving generous and sacrificial support to Our Christian World Mission to accomplish our mission.

Board Of Directors Takes Important Steps Looking To New Responsibilities January 1

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Convention met at Central Congregational Church (United Church of Christ) on Tuesday, October 5. The moderator, Rufus G. Obrecht of Chattanooga, Tenn., presided.

In addition to the regular members of the board from the Southeast Convention the following were present from the associations that will become a part of the convention on January 1, 1966:

Rev. George C. Hewson and Mr. Grover Daussman, moderator and vice-moderator of the Alabama-Tennessee Region; Rev. Joseph E. Boone, moderator of the conference and Rev. John T. Enwright, moderator of the Convention of the South, of the Georgia-South Carolina Association; Rev. Harold D. Long, moderator of the Alabama-Mississippi Association; and Rev. John Charles Mickle, moderator of the Tennessee-Kentucky Association.

Having heard and accepted with regret the resignation of Supt. James H. Lightbourne, Jr., effective December 31, 1965, the board began planning for the future.

The following Personnel Committee was appointed and charged with the responsibility of nominating the new conference minister (superintendent).

Rev. Arnold Slater, Chattanooga, chairman

Mrs. Edward M. Brown, Atlanta
Mr. Millard Fuller, Montgomery
Rev. W. Walter Hall, Lanett
Rev. Frederick A. Meyer, Atlanta
Rev. Harold A. Schulz, Cullman
Rev. Homer C. McEwen, Atlanta
Mod. Rufus G. Obrecht, Chattanooga

The Budget & Finance Committee charged with the responsibility of preparing a budget for submission to the board of directors at its January meeting is as follows:

W. J. Strickland, Decatur, Chairman
H. P. Beaird, Lanett
Rev. L. Floyd Carmack, LaGrange
W. Pressley Ingram, Birmingham
Rev. Harold C. Henderson, Montgomery
Grover Daussman, Cullman (Huntsville)

Rev. Harold D. Long, Birmingham
Rufus G. Obrecht and Supt. J. H. Lightbourne, Jr., ex officio

Also appointed was a committee to

prepare amendments to the constitution and by-laws of the convention to be presented to the 1966 annual meeting of the convention.

Rev. W. Raymond Berry, Huntsville, chairman

Rev. Annie R. Campbell, Robbins
Mrs. Arnold Slater, Chattanooga
Rev. Carolyn P. Welch, Evarts
Rev. Melvin R. Fenner, Belvidere
Rev. John J. Roemer, Nashville
Rev. Joseph E. Boone, Atlanta
Rev. W. J. Jamerson, Nashville

The Executive Committee, which, beginning January 1 will have additional responsibilities until a new conference minister is secured, is composed of the following officers and members-at-large.

Rufus G. Obrecht, moderator and chairman

Rev. Frederick A. Meyer, moderator-elect and vice-chairman

Miss Ellen Hull, Recording Secretary
W. J. Strickland, Treasurer
Rev. R. Hugh Lasseter
Rev. W. Raymond Berry
Mrs. Arnold Slater
Rev. Harold D. Long
Rev. George C. Hewson

In addition to these Dr. A. R. Van Cleave was appointed Historian for the Southeast Conference (Convention) and Mr. John Heaman, a layman of Huntsville, Alabama, was made the chairman of the committee on Stewardship and Missionary Education to replace Rev. Charles Bell, who has moved from the area.

The board instructed the moderator and superintendent to proceed with the necessary legal arrangements to amend the charter of the convention to become the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ effective January 1, 1966, or as soon thereafter as possible.

In other actions the board expressed deep appreciation to Mrs. Wilmer McCord and to Supt. Lightbourne for their faithful and effective service during the year. Mrs. McCord is the office secretary for the convention.

It was announced that the Ministers Conference will be held December 6-8 at Camp Calvin, near Atlanta, Ga. A Social Action Institute will be January 24-26, Avon Park, Fla.

United Church Launches New Advertising Campaign

An experimental advertising campaign to explain the organization and activities of the United Church of Christ is being carried out by 22 churches in the Washington, D. C., area in cooperation with the Board for Homeland Ministries, the Executive Council and the Office of Communication of the United Church.

The first series of three two column ads, stressing the new curriculum, ran in the Washington POST, STAR, and AFRO-AMERICAN, September 3, 9, and 10. The "action message" urged readers to enroll their children in Sunday School September 12th. The ads included a central telephone number, and volunteers from the churches manned phones to direct callers to the church which best met their individual needs.

Later ads will deal with basic principles of the church and its major activities. Among the subjects will be the need for ecumenicity, experimental ministries, racially integrated congregations, inner-city work, civil rights activities, social action and world ministries.

The campaign is not designed to attract people who already have a church affiliation. Its main purpose is to establish the identity of the United Church of Christ and the relationship to the denomination of the local churches. The ads are "run-of-paper" — but the churches will continue their customary advertising in the church directories.

Washington was chosen as the city for the experiment because of its large transient population, because many of its inner-city and suburban problems are typical of cities around the country and because the ministers and congregations of the area are especially aware of the need for identification of the church under its new name, Dr. Everett C. Parker, director of the Office of Communication, explained.

"This experimental use of advertising to explain the purposes of the church is another attempt to find new ways to communicate with people. The church cannot rely solely on traditional methods of communication. It must constantly seek to deliver its message in new ways so that modern man understands the eternal verities it seeks to make known," Dr. Parker said.

Worldwide Bible Reading Urged By Bible Society

More than 20 million persons all over the world will participate this year in the Worldwide Bible Reading program of the American Bible Society.

Worldwide Bible Reading, now in its 22nd year, is observed annually between Thanksgiving and Christmas as a spiritual bond to unite the peoples of the world. The theme for 1965 is "Faith for a New Age."

Each day, all persons participating read the same verse from the Bible. Selections are printed in advance on bookmarks and distributed by the Society, without charge, to churches, hotels, libraries, stores, banks and to people who request them.

This year, the first selection will be Psalm 1, to be read on Thanksgiving, and the last selection, to be read on Christmas, will be Luke 2:1-20. Different selections are listed for each day of the program.

Among the highlights of the observance are Bible Week, Dec. 5-12, and the reading of the Christmas Story on Christmas Eve. Special booklets containing the Christmas story are provided by the Society.

Those participating may use the Bible of their choice, in any translation or version. Because of the growth of the ecumenical movement in recent years, many more persons are expected to participate this year.

The Society, which will observe its 150th anniversary this spring, limits its activities to the translation, publication and distribution of the Bible, without note or comment, and the encouragement of its use.

The program originated in 1943 from a request by a lonely Marine stationed in the South Pacific. He wrote his parents, asking them to join him in daily reading of identical verses selected from the Bible. Together they would be able to maintain a true spiritual bond although thousands of miles apart. His mother, recognizing the tremendous spiritual hunger which must be experienced by many servicemen throughout the world, called the Society's office to share the idea. Thus Worldwide Bible Reading was born.

The Society's officers enlisted the active cooperation of churches across the country to bring this idea to the families in their congregations. In time, shared Bible reading between home and foxhole grew to worldwide proportions, and in the years following,

United Church Supports Student Aid Program

Two hundred and ninety college and seminary students preparing to enter the ministry of the United Church of Christ will receive a total of \$113,941 in financial assistance for 1965-66 through the denomination's national Student Aid Program.

Rev. George Nishimoto, Secretary for Church Vocations of the Council for Church and Ministry and the administrator of the program, recently announced that \$69,603 of these funds will go to 173 seminary students throughout the country. The remaining \$44,338 has been awarded to 117 college students.

Each of the 290 students has indicated the intention of entering the ministry of the United Church of Christ, either as an ordained minister or in a church related occupation. The funds are distributed in the form of "service loans" which will be canceled after ten years of service in the denomination by men, five years by women.

The maximum amounts of the awards, which are based on need, are \$400 for college students and \$500 for seminary students. Last year a total of \$121,041 was distributed to 356 college and seminary students.

For the first time this year an Emergency Loan Fund of \$12,000 has been established to aid United Church of Christ students for the ministry.

Ministerial students in the Southeast Convention have been granted financial assistance under this program.

people in other countries have joined in this Bible reading program between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Bookmarks are available by writing the American Bible Society, 450 Park Avenue, New York, New York, 10022. Also a booklet containing the Christmas Story may be obtained without charge from the same source. In quantity, the booklets cost \$3.00 per hundred.

Extend Your Horizons

Read Your
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Pierce College In Greece Expands Degree Program

Pierce College's division recently received approval from its Board of Trustees to go ahead with plans for making its degree program in social work, business administration, and the liberal arts (the college now offers degrees in English literature, history, economics, sociology and psychology) four years instead of three. To us the really encouraging thing about the college division is that the quality and enthusiasm of both its faculty and students has improved greatly during the three years we have been here. We think it has a bright future and a great offering to make to Greece in providing young women trained in fields important for national development. Next year the college division will experiment with a "language house" where promising village girls who wish to study social work but know no English will live and study the language for a year on scholarship.

While we have been reading about tragic tornado and flood damage in the Middle West, Greece has been having some of its worst earthquakes in years, principally in the Peloponnes, where many have died and whole villages have been left homeless. The students at Pierce organized a relief drive and have collected over \$600.00 to send to one of these villages.

Church World Service, the U. S. National Council of Churches agency which Newell Steward headed before he became supervisor for World Council of Churches development teams in Greece last year, recently helped to build a system for converting sea water to fresh water through solar energy on one of the Aegean islands. The project was very successful and conversion systems are now being planned for several of the other Greek islands which, like this one, are dry and have had to transport water from other islands in huge plastic tubes at a high cost.

(The United Church Board for World Ministries has five persons on the staff of Pierce College, which is in Greece. The college and the board have been related for many years.)

Mr. and Mrs. Alan Bushley,
Pierce College, Greece

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Superintendent's Corner

Life has many perplexities. Even as a child I discovered that events that brought forth great joy could also be marked by pain or sorrow. Important decisions are often made within the context of mixed emotions and on the basis of good factors that necessarily lead in different directions.

So it has been with great difficulty that Carolyn and I have struggled with the decision to accept the invitation to become Conference Minister of the new Southern Conference in North Carolina and Southern Virginia.

It was in June 1957 that we and our three children moved to Atlanta and I took up my duties as superintendent of the Southeast Convention. These have been good years for us. Many friendships have been made. We have come into contact with many people and many churches.

While there have been times of problems and struggles in the convention, I, personally, and we, as a family, have felt you wanted us in your midst and me to serve as superintendent.

It is, indeed, difficult for us to leave. The new Southern Conference offers a great challenge and opportunity for service. We, as a family, have ties to both Virginia and North Carolina. The conference will be strong in terms of the people of the churches and the ministers. I feel honored to be called to this new position.

We will be moving to Burlington, N. C., the end of December to make our home there.

HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES IMPORTANT IN UNITED CHURCH

Our sometimes harsh, always explosive and restless world, has brought into sharp visibility the traumas and the deprivations that relentlessly haunt our generation. It has become common knowledge that 5.4 million persons in our country are mentally retarded, that nearly 400,000 children under the age of 12 have no daytime or after school supervision, that 13 per cent of our children are condemned to grow up in broken homes, that a fifth of our population is trapped in the grinding jaws of poverty, that a half million youngsters will be tried on major delinquency petitions this year, and that 530,000 patients who crowd our mental hospitals are receiving only minimal care.

Confronted by this totality of man's suffering, the efforts of any segment of our population, public or private, seems small indeed. But there is reason to be encouraged by the evidence of concern that exists in the United Church of Christ.

Seventy-five residential agencies have voluntarily banded themselves together in the Council for Health and Welfare Services. The nearly 450,000 persons aided by these programs each year reflect dramatically the increasing importance assumed by the church in the alleviation of pain and distress. By engaging in this ministry, the church helps to maintain the creative ten-

sion between public and private welfare which is universally endorsed as an essential component in our social structure.

Through the past three decades the gigantic proportions of our nation's health and welfare problems have far exceeded the aid given by private philanthropy, and thus the government has stepped further and further into a field of need in which the church once stood almost alone.

The true value of the church's work has frequently lain in its willingness to experiment — and so to lead the government and other agencies toward the meeting of previously unrecognized needs. Today, several areas of such needs have become urgently clear:

There is need for day-care centers to help nine million mothers who must leave their pre-school children at home alone or with neighbors when they go to work.

There is urgent need for day-care centers for mentally retarded adults and children, of whom there are five and one-half million in our country.

There is need for homemaker services for infirm and aged people who must — or who choose to — remain in their own homes instead of moving to institutions.

It is for the express purpose of beginning "pilot projects" that will lead the government toward responsible work in these particular areas of need that, as a part of "Target Ahead" the United Church of Christ seeks the necessary funds.

One such institution is Fairview Park Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, which is a part of the Council for Health and Welfare Services. Last year the hospital employed 803 individuals to serve the needs of 16,386 regular patients and 64,303 out-patient and other patients. This 327 bed capacity institution was founded in 1892 and not only cares for those in need of its services but trains additional medical personnel (112 student nurses in 1964). Such institutions are one aspect of Our Christian World Mission.

(Another institution we, of the Southeast Convention, should have in mind is the Uplands Retirement Center and Nursing Home, Pleasant Hill, Tenn. The Nursing Home has a capacity of approximately 50 and further expansion is planned. The Retirement Center is developing steadily.)

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Reverend John M. Peyton, Retired Minister, Dies

Rev. John M. Peyton, 84, of 372 Wingfoot Street, Rockmart, Georgia, widely known and beloved retired Congregational (United Church of Christ) minister, died in the local hospital Saturday, September 25, following an illness of several days.

Funeral services were held the following Sunday afternoon at the First Presbyterian Church in Rockmart. The pastor, the Rev. Billy F. Sosebee, officiated and interment was in the Rockmart-Aragon Memory Gardens.

The Rev. Mr. Peyton was a native of Floyd County and was the son of W. S. Peyton and Phoebe Walker Peyton.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Virginia Fry Peyton, a daughter, Mrs. Charles M. Jones, of College Park, Ga., three grandchildren, and two sisters, Mrs. Lula Gilliam and Mrs. Sarah Hinton, both of Atlanta.

Mr. Peyton attended Piedmont College, Atlanta Theological Seminary, and Chicago Theological Seminary. It is noteworthy that he completed his secondary school education after becoming an adult and that he continued his studies at every opportunity.

Ordained in 1914, he served the old Sardis Church, Calhoun, Georgia. Throughout his long and effective ministerial career he served pastorates in Texas, Salisbury, North Carolina, New York, and Ohio.

For several years he served the parish made up of Oak Grove, Jones Chapel, and Hebron Churches in Georgia. Following a pastorate at Pisgah he retired.

Alabama-N. W. Florida Fellowship Officers

The following have been elected the officers for the Alabama-Northwest Florida Women's Fellowship for the year.

President — Mrs. W. Walter Hall, 806 S. 10th Street, Lanett, Alabama 36863. Phone 644-1217.

Vice-President—Miss Nonnie Looser, 615 South 6th Ave., Lanett, Alabama, 36863.

Secretary — Miss Gale White, 1521 55th St., Langdale, Alabama. Phone 756-2958.

Treasurer — Mrs. Warner Noles, 1608 14th Ct., Phenix City, Alabama.

Christian Education Chairman—Mrs. Fidelis Simmons, 1312 15th Place, Phenix City, Alabama.

Witness Chairman — Mrs. Harry Barr, 1701 14th St., Phenix City, Ala.

Spiritual Life Chairman — Mrs. Allen Hollis, 2301 45th St., Langdale, Alabama. Phone 756-2232.

National Council Leader Joins Seminary Faculty

The Reverend J. Edward Lantz has resigned as the Executive of the Southern Office of the National Council of Churches, Atlanta, Georgia, to join the faculty of the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta. He began his new duties on October 1, 1965.

For ten years Mr. Lantz has been the very able and efficient executive for the Southern Office of the National Council. The Advisory Committee to his office has expressed appreciation to him for his vision, steadfastness, courage and forbearance during his service to the Council.

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The United Church Herald

HERE AND THERE NEWS IN BRIEF

MRS. RUFUS G. OBRECHT

Members of the Southeast Convention will be saddened to learn of the death of Mrs. Mae Obrecht, the wife of the moderator of the convention, on Friday, September 17.

The funeral services were held at Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga, on the following Sunday. Rev. Arnold Slater, pastor, conducted the services.

Mrs. Obrecht was active not only in her local church, but in the work of the Women's Fellowship in the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference and the Southeast Convention, as well as the United Church Women.

In her life Mrs. Obrecht exemplified her Christian faith and spirit. She will be greatly missed from our midst.

* * * *

THE U. C. C. AND BETSY

The United Church of Christ is at work giving aid through our churches in the Louisiana area where Hurricane Betsy created a path of disaster.

The last penny of the reserve for Unforeseen Emergency Needs of the budget of the Division of World Service of the United Church Board for World Ministries was made available for this purpose.

These funds were given by the churches through One Great Hour of Sharing. Any gifts for disaster relief prior to the next OGH in the spring should be in the form of "Directed Gifts" and sent to the convention office.

* * * *

MRS. F. C. LESTER

Mrs. F. C. Lester, secretary of the Council for Lay Life and Work of the United Church, was a welcome visitor to the annual association and conference meetings. Mrs. Lester has special responsibilities for the Southern region. Mrs. Lester lives in High Point, N. C., where her husband, Dr. F. C. Lester, is pastor of a United Church.

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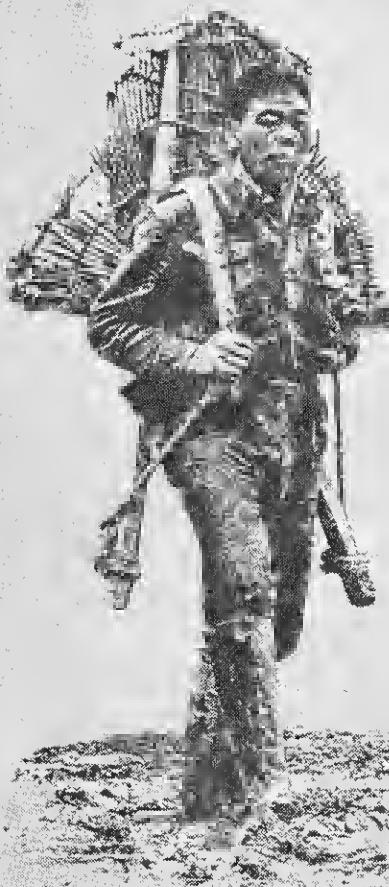
REV. LESLIE BROWN

Rev. Leslie Brown, licensed minister of the East Alabama Association, has been called to Todd Church, Shawmut, Ala. Rev. and Mrs. Brown are moving from LaGrange to the parsonage in Shawmut.

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FOOD—the first thing a man must have for his family. TONG HA KIM builds a dyke to reclaim land which he will farm. His wages are food from Church World Service in Korea—provided by your gift to SHARE OUR SUBSTANCE. Governments and struggling people must do much to prevent world famine. The church helps point the way in over 40 countries with lunches for millions of school children, food for hospital patients and for others in greatest need.

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